

Mr. Reid: I also want to say just a few words about another one of the senate's most distinguished and legendary senators, and that's Ted Kennedy. The last day of our session here was extremely frantic. We were trying to do certain things. We had a lot that we were trying to get accomplished, not the least of which was the domestic spying measure, which was so intense. So we had a lot of votes during that week, and that day we had votes. In the rush to close the session, a milestone occurred that went unremarked, and it should not have been, but that's the way things are here sometimes in the Senate. Senator Kennedy cast his 15,000th vote. He cast his 15,000th roll call vote the day that we adjourned for summer vacation. There is very little that I can say to fully honor Senator Kennedy for his 45 years of senate service. He has been somebody I've followed so very, very long.

And to think that I have an opportunity to serve with one of the Kennedys, is very important to me. In my office, right across the hall here, there is a letter that I received in 1961. Senator Kennedy had not been inaugurated but he had been elected, and he was working from where we have our Tuesday luncheons, the LBJ room. That was his office setup before he became president, and he sent me a letter. I was at Utah State University and I formed the first Young Democrats club in the history of the state. It might not sound like much, but to me it was important at the time and President Kennedy recognized that by writing me a letter.

I am so grateful for the service of the Kennedys, for what they've done for our country. We've had two of Senator Kennedy's brothers who have been assassinated. We have a brother who was killed during World War II. So Senator Kennedy deserves more attention than I've given him here today. I have so much admiration and respect for him, for what he has done for me. He has this great public persona, but for those of us who work with him, he's a man with a lot of humility, is always willing to step back into the shadows and let others get the attention. So his record of speaking for civil rights, education, working people, senior citizens, people with disabilities is unparalleled. His ability to work together -- no one could testify to that more than President Bush who is in the White House now. Legislation that President Bush has been fortunate enough to pass has been landmark legislation, has been that that Senator Kennedy has helped him with. So I value Senator Kennedy's wisdom and leadership and most of all his friendship, and recognize and congratulate him on his 15,000th roll call vote.